

January 7, 2025

TO: Judiciary Committee

RE: Testimony in Support of LD 1941

Dear Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and Honorable Members of the Judiciary Committee,

I write this letter in support of LD 1941 and urge you to vote to reestablish a system of parole in the State of Maine. This bill would further move the Maine model of corrections towards one of rehabilitation, and re-integration without compromising public safety.

Primarily, this bill reestablishes the option of parole for people who are incarcerated and have a parole eligible sentence. Research shows that parole helps shift a system towards rehabilitation by offering a chance and process for reintegration while also reducing costs for the State. In fact, estimates suggest that parole could not only save the State millions of dollars annually by reducing the costs of incarceration but would also generate millions in new economic activity.¹ Furthermore, Maine voters largely support parole and community reintegration over mass incarceration.² There is no guarantee of release, but rather the bill establishes guidelines and a process for a board to review the individual's situation once they are eligible for parole. The bill is in addition to the current SCCP program, but does not duplicate. It also requires victim supports and establishes parole-specific victims' rights.

The Maine Department of Corrections has been in the news³ a lot recently for their innovative "Maine Model" which according to their [website](#) is an approach that emphasizes "rehabilitation, *mutual respect, human dignity, and community reintegration.*" Parole would go a long way in reinforcing these values and moving the Maine model forward towards real transformation. Many of the news articles tell the stories of the hard working students and remote workers who happen to also be incarcerated at a MDOC facility. Many of these people featured are hardworking individuals who are very different people compared to when they first entered the facility. These individuals exemplify rehabilitation, and like many others deserve a chance to come home and reintegrate back into their communities where they will continue to work hard and make a positive difference.

I urge you to support LD 1941 to establish parole and help Maine continue to shine as an innovative State that puts humanity and dignity before outdated models of punishment.

Sincerely,



Jillian Foley (Westbrook, ME)

¹ See [Parole4Maine](#) for more information on the research and cost savings estimates. FAQ sheet [here](#).

² See the polling results [here](#).

³ Recent articles [here](#) and [here](#).